THE SUPPORT WORKER

I remember when the manager called. I was out looking for Pierre. He had run away from us again. Each time he ran away made it that much sooner he'd be back in the mental ward, and he was already past due. He wanted so badly to be with his family.

The manager began as she always did, by offering me a shift. It was Adam's, on Monday. Actually, there was one significant difference, which indicated that she was thinking ahead. She asked me where I was. I suppose she didn't want me to break down on the street when she told me. Adam died this weekend.

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Frederick (not Fred) knew how to cope. It was Jonathan Swift's perception that true happiness consisted of being perpetually self-deceived. I think the operative word was